

6 March 2022

Dear Honorable Members of the Environment Committee,

Re: OPPOSED - HB 5295 AN ACT CONCERNING AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION

“To (1) make changes to the Agricultural Development Council, (2) prescribe requirements for producers selling eggs directly for home consumption, (3) authorize rabbit processing facilities in the state, (4) establish a CT Grown license plate, and (5) repeal the Aquaculture Advisory Council.”

As a CT voter who cares for animals, people and the environment, I **oppose HB 5295** which seeks to promote rabbit slaughter and authorize rabbit processing facilities in the state. I not want my tax dollars used to promote the killing of rabbits; they are smart and sociable and have unique personalities. Rabbits are wonderful pets, I've enjoyed spending time with and caring for the rabbit pets of family members and friends.

Public demand has prompted many cosmetic companies to stop testing on rabbits, many furriers no longer produce coats made from the pelts of rabbits, and laws have been passed that disallow sale of commercially bred rabbits in pet stores. PetSmart and Petco no longer sell rabbits, and when Whole Foods piloted selling rabbit meat, vigorous public outcry resulted in discontinuing sales.

We've all learned from the pandemic that viruses can jump from animals to humans where animals are tightly confined for commercial purposes. Now is the time not to facilitate additional means of using animals, but to work together to find non-animal options to fulfill consumer demand for products, and to couple these efforts with aid to transition those relying on animal agriculture to more sustainable livelihoods.

HB 5295 would move us in the wrong direction, please oppose it.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Doreen Fleming
Monroe CT